

Message Text

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S E C R E T TEHRAN 2216

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, IR

SUBJ: SHAH'S COMMENTS ABOUT OPEC CONFERENCE

REF: TEHRAN 2016 (NOTAL)

1. REFERRING TO HIS ATTENDANCE AT THE RECENT OPEC MEETING DURING AUDIENCE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 8, THE SHAH COMMENTED THAT HE HAD SELDOM LISTENED TO SO MUCH "RUBBISH" AS EMANATED FROM MOST OF THE SPEAKERS DURING THE SESSION. HE DID NOT AMPLIFY.

2. THE SHAH WENT ON TO SAY THAT THERE WAS MUCH COMPLAINING ABOUT THE INVITATION LIST ISSUED BY PRESIDENT GISCARD FOR HIS APRIL CONFERENCE. TO THOSE WHO COMPLAINED TO HIM, THE SHAH OFFERED THEM THE IRANIAN SEAT AT THE TABLE: QUOTE I TOLD THEM YOU CAN HAVE MY PLACE OR YOU CAN PUT YOUR PEOPLE IN MY DELEGATION UNQUOTE.

3. DURING THE CONFERENCE THERE WAS A MOVE TO LABEL THE UNITED STATES AS AN "AGGRESSOR". THE SHAH CLAIMS TO HAVE STOPPED THAT MOTION ON THE GROUNDS THAT ANY COUNTRY IS ENTITLED TO HAVE ITS WON NATIONAL POLICY.

4. THE SHAH SAID THAT HE WAS ASKED BY PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE TO BE THE LAST SPEAKER. HE SAID HE ATTEMPTED TO POINT OUT THAT THE

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EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF TALK ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF THE THIRD WORLD

WOULD END UP ACCOMPLISHING NOTHING EXCEPT PERHAPS MAKING LIFE HARDER FOR THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH WERE NOT OIL PRODUCERS. HE POINTED OUT THAT IF RUNAWAY INFLATION CONTINUES IN THE WEST, IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO RAISE THE PRICE OF OIL. THIS IN TURN WOULD PUT ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL BURDENS ON THE THIRD WORLD. THEREFORE WHAT IS NEEDED AMONG PRODUCERS, CONSUMERS, AND OTHER COUNTRIES IS "DIALOGUE, COOPERATION, AND INTERDEPENDENCE". "IN SUM, SAID THE SHAH, "I ATTEMPTED TO PUT EVERYONE IN FRONT OF HIS OWN RESPONSIBILITY".

5. THE SHAH HAS BECOME MORE AND MORE CONVINCED THAT A FRENCH CONFERENCE OF THE KIND PROPOSED WILL GET NOWHERE. HE MUSES, "WHAT CAN COME OUT OF SUCH A CONFERENCE? HOW CAN ANYTHING COME OUT OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS?" "IT WOULD TAKE YEARS TO FIX PRICES OF ALL RAW MATERIALS AND COMMODITIES AS THE OTHER THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES INSIST", HE POINTS OUT. HE IS CLEARLY COMING TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ONLY WAY TO WORK OUT A REASONABLE ARRANGEMENT ON OIL PRICES IS THROUGH QUIET, BILATERAL TALKS.

6. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, THE SHAH SAID THAT HE HAD TALKED IN ALGIERS WITH PRINCE FAHD WHO WILL VISIT IRAN SOON. HE SAID WITH A SMILE THAT HE HAD EVEN SHAKEN HANDS WITH SAUDI MINISTER OF PETROLEUM ZAKI YAMANI. BECOMING SERIOUS AGAIN, THE SHAH POINTED OUT THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS VERY QUIET DURING THE OPEC SESSIONS BUT THAT THEY DID APPROVE THE SOLEMN DECLARATION AT THE END. HE STATED THAT THIS DEMONSTRATES ALL OVER AGAIN THAT SAUDI ARABIA DOES NOT DARE "GO IT ALONE". THEY REALIZE THAT THEY WOULD BE TREATED AS TRAITORS IF THEY DID. INCIDENTALLY THE SHAH MENTIONED THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD BE DEALING WITH THE IRAQIS AGAIN HAVING BEEN ENCOURAGED TO DO SO BY THE EGYPTIANS.

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